



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

BIBLE-STUDY IN THE PASTORATE; FIGURES AND FACTS.

BY THE EDITOR.

In order to ascertain, as exactly as possible, the general amount and character of Bible-study carried on by men who are engaged in the active work of the ministry, as well as to learn the opinions of these men on certain questions relating to theological instruction, the writer prepared and mailed to twelve hundred ministers a printed form containing certain questions, with a request for answers to them. That the reader may be better able to understand and appreciate the results of the inquiry thus instituted, it is necessary to make a statement of certain points relating to this printed form, the persons to whom it was sent, and the replies received.

1. It was understood that the contents of the replies should be regarded as confidential, so far as concerned the publication of any statement in connection with any name. Had this fact been stated more definitely in the letter accompanying the printed form, the apprehensions of a smaller number would have been aroused.

2. This printed form was not intended in any sense to extort "confessions," although it would seem to have been regarded by some in this light, if the letters which accompanied their replies are to be accepted as presenting their views. The existence of this idea may, perhaps, also account for the fact that a number of those of whom the request was made, failed to reply; a failure profoundly regretted by the writer, because there were special reasons, at least in some cases, for supposing that the contents of the reply would have been of particular interest.

3. The ministers to whom the printed form was sent were of five denominations: Congregational, Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopalian. *All were graduates of a theological seminary.* All were men engaged in the actual work of the pastorate. All had been in the ministry five years; none longer than twenty years. Every name was carefully selected.

4. The work of tabulating the "returns" has been one of extreme difficulty. Most of the questions were not of a character to be answered by "Yes," or "No." The cases of no two men were alike. The necessary brevity of the reply in many instances left much to be inferred. Care has been taken, however, to present the substance of the replies in what is believed to be a strictly accurate form.

5. As each one hundred replies was tabulated, it was noticed that the general average remained about the same. The statements herein given would not have been materially changed had the calculation been for five thousand instead of one thousand.

6. In order to give uniformity to the statement, the calculation in each case has been made upon the basis of *one thousand*. This will present clearly the relative proportion under each head.

7. Many details of a most interesting character were received in connection with the replies, which could not well be included in this presentation. These will furnish material for a second paper upon the subject in a future number of **THE STUDENT**.

8. The thanks of the writer are hereby tendered the gentlemen who so kindly and courteously granted his request for information.

1. Average time in the ministry of those furnishing information.....	10¼ years.
2. Number specially interested in Dogmatic Theology.....	242
3. Number specially interested in Church History.....	252
4. Number specially interested in New Testament Exegesis.....	287
5. Number specially interested in Dogmatic Theology and New Testament Exegesis.....	45
6. Number specially interested in Old Testament Exegesis.....	55
7. Number specially interested in Old Testament and New Testament Exegesis.....	124
8. Number using in their personal Bible-study the Revised Version.....	366
9. Number using in their personal Bible-study the Old Version.....	426
10. Number using in their personal Bible-study both versions.....	208
11. Number giving a certain allotted time, outside of devotional reading and sermon-preparation, to both Old Testament and New Testament study.....	412
12. Number giving such time to New Testament, but not to Old Testament.....	76
13. Number giving such time to Old Testament, but not to New Testament.....	76
14. Number giving no special time to Bible-study.....	288
15. Number giving time to the study of topics involving biblical study.....	148
16. Number who have read the entire Old Testament in English one or more times since leaving the Seminary.....	636
17. Number who have read the entire Old Testament in Hebrew.....	*—
18. Number who have read in Hebrew certain books:	
Psalms.....164	Pentateuch.....102
Genesis.....104	Isaiah.....104
	Minor Prophets.....52
	Job.....16
19. Number who read Hebrew with some degree of regularity.....	†180
20. Number who have read the entire New Testament in English one or more times since leaving the Seminary.....	790
21. Number who have read the New Testament in Greek.....	204
22. New Testament books which have been read in Greek:	
Gospels by.....212	Lesser Epistles by.....112
Epistle to the Romans by.....132	Epistles to the Corinthians by.....84
Acts by.....100	Epistle to the Galatians by.....84
Epistle to the Hebrews by.....92	Revelation by.....48
23. Number who have taken up and made special study of separate books.....	740
24. Old Testament books which have been studied specially:	
Genesis by.....292	Minor Prophets by.....102
Psalms by.....256	The Pentateuch by.....96
Isaiah by.....204	Ruth by.....72
Job by.....124	Jonah by.....52
Daniel by.....104	Song of Solomon by.....36
25. New Testament books which have been studied specially:	
Gospels by.....380	Epistle to the Galatians by.....176
Epistle to the Romans by.....368	Lesser Epistles by.....160
Acts by.....228	Philemon by.....136
Epistle to the Hebrews by.....228	Epistles to the Corinthians by.....120
Epistle to the Ephesians by.....212	Gospel of John by.....116
Revelation by.....192	Epistle of James by.....48
26. Number who have done special work in Old Testament History.....	372
27. Number who have done special work in Old Testament Theology.....	228
28. Number who have done expository preaching.....	‡624
29. Number who have prepared exegetical papers:	
a) On the Old Testament.....	132
b) On the New Testament.....	140
c) On subjects of which the department was not specified.....	124
30. In reference to the teaching of the English Bible in the Theological Seminary,	
a) Number out of a thousand favoring it.....	888

* Ten or twelve men had read more than one-half of the Old Testament in Hebrew, but no one had entirely finished it.

† It was difficult to make from the papers a satisfactory calculation on this point. The number 180 is probably an over-estimate.

‡ This was difficult to determine; men's ideas as to what expository preaching is, differ considerably.

b) Number out of a thousand opposing it.....	48
c) Number expressing no opinion.....	64
31. In reference to making Hebrew an elective in the Theological Seminary,	
a) Number favoring it.....	136
b) Number opposing it.....	808
c) Number expressing no opinion.....	66
32. In reference to the advisability of having in the Theological Seminary instruction in	
Biblical Theology as distinct from Systematic Theology:	
a) Number favoring it.....	932
b) Number opposing it.....	20
c) Number expressing no opinion.....	48

In submitting the results of this inquiry, our space will allow only a few general remarks:—

1. New Testament Exegesis, it will be seen, is the favorite study of the largest number of ministers. Including those whose special studies are divided between the New Testament and Dogmatic Theology, and between the New Testament and Old Testament, we find that four hundred and sixty-seven, or nearly one half of the whole number, take special interest in the New Testament. The other half, four hundred and ninety-four, give their chief attention to History and Dogmatic Theology. Fifty-five take special interest in the Old Testament, or, including those who combine the New Testament with the Old, one hundred and seventy-nine out of a thousand.

2. From one stand-point, the number of those making use of the Revised Version in their personal Bible-study, is surprisingly large. And yet, when one reflects that forty-three ministers out of every hundred, do not avail themselves of this new and best Bible-help, there must arise a feeling of sincere regret that men should be so blind to what is manifestly their own best interest.

3. At a rough estimate, only about one half give special time to the study of the Bible outside of devotional reading and sermon-preparation. Devotional reading of the Bible is not Bible-study; nor is the preparing of a sermon to be regarded as Bible-study, unless, indeed, the sermon is in the strictest sense an expository one. Topical study of a certain kind may well be classified under this head; yet we doubt whether much of it is, after all, real Bible-study. We must draw the line somewhere between biblical study and Bible-study. Both are important; but much that is classified under the former caption cannot be included under the latter. Right here, we believe, is the mistake of many men. They suppose themselves to be doing work called Bible-study. If, however, they would but reflect, they would see that the work which they do under this head is, after all, something else. It is, of course, good work, and necessary work, but *not* Bible-study.

4. There would, at first, seem to be ground for surprise that of those interrogated, not one had read the Old Testament through in the Hebrew. But let us think: Does any one of us have among his acquaintances in the ministry one whom he knows to have done this? The fact is, that there has been no encouragement for work of this kind. What every average student ought to do during his seminary course, and what each pastor ought to do every five years of his pastorate, has not been done even by one in ten thousand, not to speak of one in a thousand. It is, on the other hand, an encouraging feature of the returns, that so large a proportion, almost one in five, are now reading Hebrew with some degree of regularity. Four years ago, this would have been one in twenty-five. Five years hence, it will be *one of two*.

5. One minister in three has studied specially the Book of Genesis; one in four, the Psalms; one in five, Isaiah; one in eight, Job; one in ten, Daniel; one in ten, the Minor Prophets; one in ten, the Pentateuch as a whole; one in fourteen, Ruth; one in twenty, Jonah. We may, each for himself, decide whether or not this is a creditable showing.

6. We are surprised at the number, one in three, of those who have done special work in the line of Old Testament History; and even more so at the number, nearly one in four, who have given special study to Old Testament Theology.

The fact that the International Sunday-school Lessons have emphasized the need of historical work, will perhaps account for the first; while the latter number is no doubt due, in great measure, to the publication of Oehler's Old Testament Theology, under the editorship of Professor Day.

7. It was interesting to note the different opinions expressed concerning the value of expository preaching. Some had tried it, but, at the request of their auditors, had stopped. Others had found it more and more instructive and interesting. Is it really true that a man who *can* preach, will fail to interest his hearers in the interpretation of the Word of God, if he has prepared himself properly for his work? Such a thing is scarcely possible. It may be accepted as an established fact, that the man who fails as an expository preacher fails, not because the people do not wish to hear the Bible expounded, but rather, because the preacher has not learned how to expound it, or has not taken sufficient time for preparation. It is only a diligent student that can expound Scripture. Sermons, the most attractive, may be "evolved out of one's inner consciousness;" Scripture-exposition cannot be so evolved. In short, men fail in their attempt to expound Scripture because, strange as it may seem, they do not know Scripture.

8. Sooner or later, the Bible in *English* will be studied in all our seminaries. The times demand it. The demand must be granted. When nine ministers out of ten state in definite terms, upon the basis of their experience in the work for which the seminary is supposed to train a man, that it is desirable to have men trained in the English Bible, a pressure is brought to bear upon the seminaries which they cannot, if they would, withstand. Within five years every divinity school of influence will have made provision for instruction in the English Scriptures, not simply for those who study no Hebrew or Greek; but also for those who are at the same time doing linguistic work, and exegetical work of a critical character.

9. Hebrew will never generally be made an elective. That is, for full graduation from a theological seminary there will be demanded in the future, as in the past, some knowledge of this language. The present system of requiring of all men the same amount of work, will certainly be modified. It must be so arranged that men who have special inability in acquiring language, may use the bulk of their time in lines of study where, perhaps, the results accomplished will be greater. There is no man, however, worthy of graduation from a theological seminary, who cannot, if he will make a proper effort, acquire sufficient Hebrew to be of great practical benefit to him. It is sheer nonsense for a man to claim either that he cannot learn it, or that when learned he can make no practical use of it. This might have been said a decade since, but to-day such a statement cannot stand for a minute.

10. Finally; if all who favored the introduction into the theological seminary of "Biblical Theology" as a branch of instruction distinct from "Dogmatic Theol-

ogy," understood what is now meant by the term "Biblical Theology," there would seem to be very little difference of opinion in reference to the question. It is, however, a notorious fact that not one man in three really has a true conception of this term and of what it is intended to include. As in the case of the term "Higher Criticism," men will misunderstand it, no matter how often the correct meaning of it is presented. Nevertheless, one has only to know what "Biblical Theology" is to appreciate its paramount value. Of the various theological departments, this, more justly than any other, comes under the head of Bible-study.

The writer of this paper is a layman; he has never been a pastor. It may be said that such a one is in no position to appreciate the cares and burdens of a pastorate; that he little realizes the pressure resting upon the pastor, a pressure which renders study in many cases next to impossible; and that, consequently, it is not for *him* to sit in judgment on those whose position he cannot appreciate.

There is a measure of truth in this. It would, indeed, be wholly true, if from an outside position, with no knowledge of facts, and with no interest in the subject, he were coldly and formally to philosophize as to what ought to be done. But this is not the case.

During the past few years he has been brought, in a peculiar manner, into close relations with thousands of ministers. He has become personally acquainted with many hundreds. Every day in the year brings letters by the score from *ministers*, detailing their troubles, their difficulties, their disappointments, their afflictions. He has in this way gained a knowledge of the minister's life which even an experience of that life would not have given him. He is not on the outside, but rather on the inmost side. He does not write in order to criticize, but, if possible, to stimulate. And what is written rests upon the statements, the "confessions," as they themselves have termed them, of men in the work.

Let everything be granted that is asked; let every allowance be made that is demanded; let every fact receive its most favorable interpretation. It nevertheless remains true that the ministry, taken through and through, comes far short of doing in the line of Bible-study, what *is* expected of them, what *ought* to be expected of them, and what they *ought* to expect of themselves. The Bible is not known as it ought to be known, and is not used by them as it ought to be used. A reform is needed in this direction. Let it be inaugurated.